

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for triggering an occupant protection device (19) in a vehicle including the steps:
detecting a first measured variable while simultaneously generating a corresponding first signal (11) for indicating a necessity for triggering the occupant protection device (19);
detecting an acceleration value in the z direction while simultaneously generating a corresponding second signal (13);
calculating a trigger signal (18) for triggering at least one occupant protection device (19) as a function of the first and second signals (11, 13); and
triggering the at least one occupant protection device (19) as a function of the calculated trigger signal (18).
2. The method as recited in Claim 1,
wherein acceleration values in the x and/or y direction and/or a measured variable, which describes the area ahead of the vehicle and/or the vehicle surroundings, are detected as the first measured variable.
3. The method as recited in Claim 1,
wherein the area ahead of the vehicle and/or the vehicle surroundings is/are detected in addition to detecting an acceleration value in the x and/or y direction while simultaneously generating a further signal (15) which, like the first signal (11), is incorporated into the calculation of the trigger signal (18) for triggering the at least one occupant protection device (19) as a function of the level of the second signal (13).
4. The method as recited in Claim 1, 2 or 3,
wherein acceleration sensors (10) are used for detecting the first measured variable or radar sensors (14), lidar sensors (14), video sensors (14), or ultrasonic sensors (14) are used for detecting the vehicle surroundings and/or the area ahead of the vehicle.
5. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims,
wherein airbags, such as driver and/or passenger and/or side and/or head and/or knee and/or window airbags and/or electrically operable side windows and/or sunroof

- and/or seats and/or reversible or pyrotechnical seat belt tensioners are triggered as the occupant protection device (19).
6. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein the level of the first signal (11) is reduced in the calculation of the trigger signal (18) as a function of the second signal (13) and/or the vehicle model.
 7. The method as recited in Claim 6, wherein only the level peaks of the first signal (11) are reduced as a function of the second signal (13), or the level of the first signal (11) is reduced by a predefined value as a function of the level of the second signal (13).
 8. The method as recited in one of Claims 1 through 5, wherein the trigger threshold for triggering the at least one occupant protection device (19) is raised in the calculation of the trigger signal (18) as a function of the second signal (13).
 9. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein a raising of the deployment threshold or a lowering of the level of the first signal (11) is carried out in the calculation of the deployment signal (18) as a function of the characteristic-velocity of the vehicle or the relative velocity of the vehicle with respect to an obstacle.
 10. A device for triggering an occupant protection device (19) in a vehicle including:
a first detection device (10) for detecting a first measured variable and for simultaneously generating a corresponding first signal (11) for indicating a necessity for triggering the occupant protection device (19);
a second detection device (12) for detecting an acceleration value in the z direction and for simultaneously generating a corresponding second signal (13);
a calculation device (16, 17) for calculating a trigger signal (18) for triggering at least one occupant protection device (19) as a function of the first and second signals (11, 13); and
a trigger device (16) for triggering the at least one occupant protection device (19) as a function of the calculated trigger signal (18).

11. The device as recited in Claim 10,
wherein, in addition to detecting the acceleration values in the x and/or y direction, a device (14) is provided for detecting a measured variable (15) which describes the area ahead of the vehicle and/or the vehicle surroundings.